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The Divine Sensitiveness. A PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

By HENRY J. PICKETT.

Modern science, greatly dating, and going forth from conquest to conquest, is doing a great service to truth by revealing the sensitiveness of the world which is our home. Sir Oliver Lodge the other day, in speaking of that impalpable mysterious power called "ether," out of the use of which is coming the wonders of wireless telegraphy and telephony, "listening in," "broadcasting," "gliding," expressed the view that we are only at its beginnings, that undreamed resources awaited the workers of to-morrow. In tapping the sensitiveness of the material world so much is being done, may we not, facing these truly wonderful days of spiritual opportunity and privilege, by correspondence with the yet more sensitive realm of the spiritual, accomplish the greater works" promised by our redeeming Lord?

In our relation with each other, and by the way in which we act and react on each other, we are constantly touching the truth made clear to us by modern science. To go into certain company and you are chilled, and, perceiving it, you withdraw yourself as quickly as possible. ... Speaking of it afterwards you say, "I could feel at once the atmosphere (ether) was unfriendly. Anything I had said there would have been misinterpreted. Anything I had done would have been misreported, it was like walking into a fog." Or again, you go into other company, and you are at home immediately. You feel you are understood and trusted, received without criticism, there you are at your best, and you do your best work.

But the wonder of all this subtle ministry of sensitiveness passes into awe as we remember that we act and react upon God in much the same way. That we affect God sympathetically or adversely, creating by our mood and bearing, conditions favourable for His activity or sending Him away to find the right conditions elsewhere. That, indeed, on this question of atmosphere and what can or cannot be achieved within it, heaven and earth, God and man, are very much like. It is very striking, remembering the fragmentary records of our Lord's life, that we find so many evidences of this truth in the gospels. Even Jesus was limited. His action by adverse conditions. That in the practical theology of this question, the greatest of all our questions concerning religion, because it deals with the very real problem of how God is to get His opportunity in His own world. All problems give place to that.

We often hear it ignorantly and foolishly asserted, "God can do anything." To speak of God being con-

ditioned by man is to lower the idea of God." But is not this to set up a different moral standard, a lower moral standard for God, than we set up for ourselves? God cannot do everything. God cannot do moral impossibilities, moral non-realities. God is conditioned by man, because man is moral as God is. There are limits to the Divine action, moral limits, set up by human longings, choices, desires, wills. We recall here Augustine's prayer, a prayer he lived to regret, "O Lord, convert me, but not yet!" There shines forth the whole truth. That which limits the work of Jesus in and among men is an opposing interest, a counter presence, an unshared sympathy, an adverse will. These set up an impassable barrier to all contemplation of the great state of things in every realm with which men have to do it is that before which they are forced to retire. It is the one limit God Himself cannot overstep.

A practical theology indeed. Why are not all Christians equally spiritual, equally zealous for the Lord of Hours? Why is it that the most spiritual delights experienced by certain members of any given congregation are no more understood by others than as though they were not there? How is it that the Bible is to one Christian a charm, to another a dry-as-dust volume, read as a duty—and that an occasional one? How is it that a fluctuation in the money market excites more interest than a decline or increase of those who love the Son of God? And how is it that the everyday concerns of the newspaper, of recreation, of dress and appearance are often sought after and longed for than the questions which have to do with the saving of the world? Why is it that all the Lord's people are not prophets?

It cannot be that God has favourites, or that He makes a favourite of Him. Nor is it that there is in all the treasury of God any spiritual gift open to one not equally possible to all. It is because in heart so many pray, "O Lord, convert me, but not yet! Make me willing to do anything for Thee, but not yet! Make me ready to put my preference and will, my home and business, my lover, my programme in the background, leaving all the best places for Thee and Thine, but not yet!"

It is the counter current that baffles God. That is in a heart so ready to be done immediately follows the petition, "Thy Kingdom come," and precedes the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." Because when the adverse will has given way Thy Kingdom does come, and no temptation is any longer a primal difficulty or danger.

II.

This brings us to the immediate and pressing purpose of this appeal to our

* 1. Mark vi, 5; Matt. xii, 15; Matt. xiii, 58; John i, 38.



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Woman's Views

Those of our readers who are actively associated with a Woman's Own will do well to arrange for a vigorous Visiting Committee. If we are to attain a maximum efficiency in our work, it is not only necessary that we should understand the circumstances and needs of those to whom we seek to minister. Some of us, especially such sheltered country girls as ourselves, with some one alone at hand to bear the heavy end of every burden, and with no urgent anxiety regarding ways and means, that we are apt to become unimaginative—even stolid. To such there can be no better "quickener" than a half-day's visitation among women who are seeking, as so many are, to lead Christian lives amid much discouragement. The problem of unemployment, the difficulties of rearing a big family on small means, the delicate health of an overburdened mother, or anxiety over a war-wounded husband, with often the additional overshadowing that comes into the home that Drink enters—some or all of these are constituting, for many harassed women, a burden too heavy to be borne.

Many of them, too, have the additional pang of knowing that their cares; none ever calls to offer with kindly inquiry a word of comfort. No wonder that so many lay down, not physically or spiritually, but what is (to women more comfortably placed) the happiest period of life. There is no prospect of service which is new, and so close to our hand, as this: nor is there any more clamant call. Many ministers, quick to observe the signs of the times, have organised schemes of their own to meet this crying need; and have allotted among suitable women visitors the duty, the agreeable and practical one in any way associated with the Church. It is well for visitation to be thus directed and systematically organised; and at the same time, some practical work needs to wait for ministerial authority before embarking upon this Christlike work.

Years ago I was present at a tremendous Rally of women; it had been splendidly organised, and at Tower Hill, a considerable borough was packed from floor to ceiling. Rarely could any speaker have had a better audience than this quiet, reverent throng of home-keeping women. The opening hymn was sung with heartiness, the prayer that followed went right home to the mother-heart, and amid a respectful hush the president announced with much elat the lady who was to address the meeting. She was an honoured name, so we forgave her for her too conspicuous apparel, and waited with expectancy for the message. By one who at least her speech will never be forgotten; she told us of luxurious homes in foreign countries, inveighed against the wretchedness of the homes in which we contrasted with the home-conveniences which she herself enjoyed, indulged in some silly talk concerning the failings of men and the superiority of women, and, as a practical conclusion, described how to make cradles out of banana crates!

When, at the Conference that followed, an earnest young woman rose and asked how far a mother might hope to assist a spiritual impetus of her children, and by what means she could best train her little ones to Christian manhood and womanhood, the speaker had suggestions to make, and no opinion to express. What a tragedy that any such opportunity should ever find us ill-equipped that we are unable to turn to a good account. Any woman, who is possessed of a right spirit and alert intelligence, may widen her experience and enlarge her sympathies by the use of a valuable ministry, if we will seek through regular visitation to come into sympathetic contact with those whom she seeks to serve.

A Text for the Week.—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . .

MONROE.

"Leader" Table Talk.

Circuit Aggression.

I have been struck with two reports which appear in the present issue of the *Leader*. One is from the Chatham, Shaftesbury, and Guildford Circuit. It tells of an increase of thirty-nine members, and gives evidence of real aggression in various directions. The station committee is wide awake, and the ministers' energies are scattered over such a large area that they are not able to match the "Bait" in any matter of fact, there appears to be a present almost everywhere, and a main reason is the magnetic personality of an efficient superintendent. And no wonder, for on Friday last the Second Reading of his Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors for consumption on the premises to persons under eighteen years of age was carried by an overwhelming majority. An amendment for rejection secured only 35 votes, while 338 were recorded against it. The Bill embodies the first of the four points in the programme of the Temperance Council of the Churches. Lady Astor has the honour of being the first woman to introduce a Bill into the House of Commons, and it is questionable whether the measure of real temperance reform ever secured such a majority of votes. She was, as usual, warm and vivacious, but her most conspicuous feature of her speech was the moral earnestness which inspired it. Her opponents were nearly all on one side of the House, and the Home Secretary was conspicuous among them. He not only spoke against the Bill, but made no promise could be made of further facilities for the passing of the measure. The voting must have been a surprise to him, and it may be that the Government will have to revise its programme in relation to this as it has already had to do in relation to some other things. The Temperance cause is surely winning.

House-to-house Visitation.

If I were asked to name our most flourishing church in London, I should be inclined to say "Ealing." I suppose the building holds five or six hundred. It is regularly comfortably filled, and it is a credit to the circuit has had a succession of able ministers, and the present one is as any church might covet. Mr. Roberts is a man of some vision, and the art of getting others to work. Among the agencies of the church is "a tract society," and he has secured a copy of the report which its secretary presented to the Quarterly Meeting. I give some quotations in the hope that others will emulate the good example of Ealing:—"We have eight distributors, with a distribution of 500 tracts per month. The monthly visitors are very much appreciated, and the distributor is usually welcomed. We have every reason to believe that the 'tracts' have a means of reaching the door and the receivers, and we find them a great help to ourselves in reaching the homes and hearts of those who attend no place of worship regularly. To these we give an invitation to the services of the Sanctuary, including our 'Women's Own' meetings, and where God, in several cases our invitations have been accepted." The minister attaches great importance to this kind of work, and rightly so. It is very simple, but I believe one of the most effective forms of Christian service—"Personal evangelism." The master secret of church progress.

The Late Mr. S. Terry.

I noticed on Saturday an intimation of the sudden death of Mr. Samuel Terry, of Aldershot. His life was more than an ordinary one, but through all the changes of fortune he was one of the most ardent Primitive Methodists that I have ever known. He was connected with the army as a chaplain at Guildford, and on removing to Aldershot about half a century ago became a member of the Primitive Methodist Church. He established a flourishing business, and at one time had five shops in the neighbourhood. His generosity was acknowledged by his people for the cause exuberant. He was almost invariably sent as a delegate to district meeting, and frequently held the office of Conference. He became prominent in the denomination, and the late Rev. John Atkinson nominated Mr. Terry for the first Presidency of the Conference. The original trustees of the Aldershot Free-press Home, and one of the delights of his life was to do the catering at the anniversary. He was the soul of honour, but misfortune overtook

him. He lost large sums of money through becoming surety for others, and during the latter part of his life he was a poor creature. He lived in a cottage at Ash Vale, but, with the change of fortune, his religious zeal knew no abatement. It found expression in caring for the poor and settlement in the district. He won their profound regard, and his mission among them was unique.

Majority 381!

I believe congratulations have poured in on Lady Astor from all over the country. And no wonder, for on Friday last the Second Reading of her Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors for consumption on the premises to persons under eighteen years of age was carried by an overwhelming majority. An amendment for rejection secured only 35 votes, while 338 were recorded against it. The Bill embodies the first of the four points in the programme of the Temperance Council of the Churches. Lady Astor has the honour of being the first woman to introduce a Bill into the House of Commons, and it is questionable whether the measure of real temperance reform ever secured such a majority of votes. She was, as usual, warm and vivacious, but her most conspicuous feature of her speech was the moral earnestness which inspired it. Her opponents were nearly all on one side of the House, and the Home Secretary was conspicuous among them. He not only spoke against the Bill, but made no promise could be made of further facilities for the passing of the measure. The voting must have been a surprise to him, and it may be that the Government will have to revise its programme in relation to this as it has already had to do in relation to some other things. The Temperance cause is surely winning.

Meetings of Brewery Companies.

Since the war there have been bitter lamentations over the price of beer. The wall of the brewers has been loud of all, but a glance at the balance sheets of some of the companies suggests a different viewpoint. The profits of their pockets they have little reason to complain. On the 6th inst., for instance, the annual general meeting of Messrs. Brewster & Co. was held. The chairman, Mr. William Harris, in his address to the shareholders, was at one moment doleful and the next jubilant. Sentences like the following would suggest that things were in a very bad way: "The large number of unemployed, and the crushing taxation on beer were very unfavourable factors. I said last year that by their crushing taxation the Government were gradually killing the trade in beer." But there were other passages in the speech which suggested that this picture was not a very accurate one, unconsciously long time in dying." The profits for 1921 were £70,887, but under this "gradually killing" process the profits rose in 1922 to £86,368, a unanimous vote it was resolved "That the directors be paid, in addition to their fees for the year 1922, such a sum as, after providing for taxation, will leave them each the sum of one thousand guineas."

Industrial Ureast: A Way Out.

This is the title of a book of forty-eight pages by B. Sedgwick Rowntree, published by Longmans, Green, and Co. at 1s. net. Among employers of labour there is no man who has a greater right to be consulted on social and economic questions than the author of this little book. To those who regard capital as the enemy of labour the arguments are strong and no force. The appeal is not to them. It is written from the standpoint of one who believes in the present economic system, but who wishes to see it purged of its abuses. There are points which one could easily criticise, but the book is a real contribution to the solution of the most urgent problems of the hour.

VIOLENT.

Social Movements.

Sickness in a Collier's Row.

By ERNEST B. STURDY.

I have just returned from visiting a young woman who, among the Sluts, is the wife of a miner, and fortunately—tragic admission!—they have no children. They live in a house with one room down and one up, in a long, ugly, monotonous row. There are no yards; a concrete footpath—along the back of the houses, and the conveniences are on the other side of the open road. The front doors open upon small gardens, and there is no road at the front.

The house in which my friends live is one of a few that differ slightly from the rest. They have not the dignity of a front door. The houses are in blocks, and the end buildings in each block are made into two smaller back-to-back houses. There is a fireplace in the bedroom, but in my friend's house it is useless because it smokes; and as the doctor says that his patient must be kept in a warm and even temperature, her bed has been brought into the downstairs room. All the work, including the cooking and the clearing of the stairs in this room. There is, of course, no bathroom—a sanitary convenience that is much more needed in a miner's house than in a middle-class one. When the husband comes home black from work he has to tub by the bedside. There is no prolonged period of quiet, day or night. The house is never quiet, and the work of the women on the hill-top have to pass it going to and from their work, and the noise of the boots on the pavement is incessant. It is after midnight before traffic ceases, and the procession of forefist men coming in at a minute's clock. When people are in good health it is surprising how easily they become accustomed to noisy surroundings, and the noise of the street is being disturbed by them. But it is otherwise in times of sickness, and the nerve-strain upon the invalid who has to stay in bed for days and longer under such conditions must be cruel.

I have cited this case not as one of unusual hardship, but as one of regular work, and, though mine's wages are shockingly low just now, there is no poverty in this home. Such conditions as I have described, and in some places much worse, are to be found in all parts of the Northern coalfield. It is just the fact that these are average conditions, under which thousands of decent, hard-working people are compelled to live—and die—that makes

For some years my mother was an invalid, almost confined to her bedroom. I have seen her in the same conditions of comfort that surrounded her last days with the ugliness and noise and discomfort amid which my sick friend has been passing her last hours. I am grateful and revolt. Nothing was too good for my mother. But is anything too good for any sufferer? The cheer she has the honour of being a miner's wife, be condemned to pass through the most terrific physical strains under conditions that intensify her agony and lessen her chance of recovery?

Surely it is not extravagant to assert that the first claim to decent and comfortable surroundings is a right to be made right to those who do the world's work with brain or muscle, and not as a privilege to the few who are idle. The test of our civilisation on its material side is the comfort of our working masses, and, if this is not the intention of the world, it must be condemned as inefficient and in need of radical reorganising.

Our Master.

XL.—He is the Most Imitable of Men.

By FRANK HOLMES.

It was Dr. Fairbairn who spoke of the Master as the most imitable person who ever lived, and surely it expresses a necessary truth, or many of His words are emptied of their natural meaning. The idea does indeed sound unusual, and we all too easily assume that it is not. This is due, probably, as much to our loose thinking as to any spiritual indolence. We all cadence much in our lives that we would be conscientious enough to correct if only we thought out things more.

It is also important to remember that the real issue is confused for us by certain types of imitation which have been more praised than followed. A literal imitation of the Master is as the Master such as that of St. Francis of Assisi is not possible except to certain temperaments, and even then is only partially possible. Indeed such an imitation is not generally desirable.

Its spiritual values are gravely limited, if beautiful as it is in certain respects, leaving so much of life out. Its radical defect is its exaltation of the outward form of life to a place of equality with its inner spirit, and hence it never escapes the touch of artificiality. It overlooks the truth that in its outer expression every life ought to be unique in some measure. We serve best by being ourselves, and by realising to the full our special gifts and possibilities. In this sense the Master is truly very partially imitable, and it is natural that it should be so.

There is, however, a much more with aspect, and a much more possible one because it is more spiritual. It is concerned with the things in which we are indeed poor—the things which are the power and the formative ideals of life. Here Jesus is the Supreme Master. He has reduced spiritual life to its final simplicity, and its character and conduct to their fundamental quality and motive. In this He has corrected the very bases of being, and brought the riches within the reach of everyone. This is the sense in which the Master is the most imitable of men. The true "imitation of Christ" is not simply making a copy of Him, but sharing His spirit. His outgoing. His passion. His spiritual qualities of mind and heart and will are among the most intimate things of life, and have both thrived and thrill in them. We imitate by yielding to their spell, and they in turn initiate us into a baptism. "Deep calls unto deep," emotions of fine quality are awakened, and inspirations of high degree are begotten; and under their mystic alchemy, imitation passes into assimilation. We needs must follow the lead when we feel it, and following we share it.

Such experience, of course, implies a deep sense of appreciation and dedication; but such imitation is not only more possible than any other kind, it is intrinsically more valuable. It meets every fundamental need of man. It makes possible the underlying spiritual unity of the race, and the self-realisation—the ideal so emphasised by modern writers. We can be all the more truly ourselves because in this deepest sense we are truly His.

Others are great in the things that separate them from their fellows—their gifts, possessions, their wealth when we have some of those opportunities is often wasteful. The Master is great in the things that unite men together—the necessary things. It is proof of something more than greatness. That which is essential is in the last analysis divine.

At the annual meeting of the Watlington Sunday School Union Rev. Frank B. Shovel was elected president of the Union.

CHURCHES AND POPULOUS CENTRES.

Our Position in Bristol.

By Our Special Correspondent.

One could wish for our Church in Bristol a more influential position than she at present holds. A city that has a population of 500,000 people ought to be more worthily represented in the interests of Primitive Methodism than she is to-day. We have only five circuits, made up of twenty-two churches, including those outside the city boundary. But while an ardent Primitive Methodist views this with deep concern, he at any rate can value the splendid work of laymen and people in the city, and believes that there are those whose love and service for the Church are as great as can be found anywhere in the denomination. And if in this article the note of criticism should be struck, it is only a real concern for the welfare of the Church that prompts the judgment.

The West Country is noted for its Methodist churches. In Bristol, the largest city, the Methodists are a numerous and influential folk. While we cannot say that our own Church is numerically strong, we believe that our influence is in greater proportion to our numbers. Possibly the reason for our limited expansion may be due to the fact that even in Bristol, the largest of our Methodist Churches, and notably the Mother Church, had well covered the ground, and there are no points secured commanding positions, and saw to the erection of suitable edifices. The effect of John Wesley's work in Bristol is felt to-day. Therefore as life centers we had to begin in a small way, had to proceed slowly owing to the exigencies of our small numbers. But as we progress, if at all, had to be at a steady pace.

The problem of the city church is made more difficult by the migration of our numbers, and the fact that from this centre to outlying districts. Thus places of worship which were centrally situated are found insufficiently attended mainly by people who live at a distance. A tradesman can follow up his customers by opening a new shop in a district where most of his customers live, but it is not as easy to close a chapel and build in a fresh district. Not of the members of Ebenezer, the mother church of Bristol, have to travel a considerable distance to attend Divine worship, and have to pass other chapels of their own denomination on the way. Our Essex-street Church is another case in point.

Where our people have been held and satisfied, but do not want to leave the venture has paid. Eastville Church proves this. Here we have a building at the junction of two main roads. The property is devoted to the side appearance is attractive, and the congregations generally are very fine. At Whitehall, where we have a commanding position a splendid structure, and the policy of those who inaugurated this forward movement has been amply justified. If we could have in Bristol the strong, virile lay leadership evident in some of the Northern and Midland circuits, greater progress would be realised. Given suitable laymen of daring and resource, the whole aspect of our Church in Bristol would be changed. It is the city churches too heavy, amounting to 29,000, which work out at about 28 per member. The interest alone paid yearly would be a considerable sum. aggressive policy, inevitably fall in the church life of the city.

Perhaps the difficulties were insurmountable, but admission of Primitive Methodism in Bristol had not been so sparing of ministerial agency the result would have been a greater effectiveness in the city.

The financial problem may have deterred them, although I believe the people of Bristol would have been glad to support an adequate ministerial staff. There is in some parts of the city a tendency towards free gospelism,

and the influence of the Independent Methodist Church is in this direction.

I enter no plea for pastors, but there is something wrong with a system that only permits a candidate to be in the pulpit of his chief church three Sundays a quarter, because he has so many other churches to visit. In the year 1916 the six Bristol Circuits were reduced to five. There was thus lost to the city a superintendent minister, and however necessary the step may have seemed at that time, it was a retrograde movement. If our denomination is to develop in Bristol a more adequate ministerial supply imperative. Surrounded by a strong Free Church element, with influential sister Methodist Churches all over the city, what can a staff of five ministers accomplish? If we are to retain our young men and women it is imperative we must supply supply, because the denominational appeal is not so arresting as it was to their fathers. The fact that at Eastville is a practical illustration of what an adequate and effective pulpit supply can maintain. Here we have our best congregations, and the work grows. Whitehall has bright prospects if only the minister could concentrate more.

If the Bristol churches are to prosper then Chapel circles should be swept away in order that the energies of ministers and people can be devoted to establishing and extending work of the Kingdom. The money saved could then be applied to the maintenance of a more adequate ministerial staff. Moreover, given the right type of man, his term in the city ought not to be cut short. Work always suffers from lack of a consistent ministry. The minister's grace of adaptability ought to be added to the grace of continuity. If to the love of Church our people can cultivate a vision of God; if the spirit of prayer, our schemes are made; if with diligence and true devotion we end our efforts to the task, the proper results and achievements of Primitive Methodism in this city will not only equal, but will surpass all the good which hitherto has been witnessed.

South Wales Mission.

All-Round Advance.

At the Quarterly Meeting held last Saturday the attendance was the best on record. No fewer than ten candidates for the local preachers' plan came forward, and we report a net increase of 57 members for the year, making a total of 103 in two years. This outpour of our Church has for months been witnessed. The conversions revive the congregations, especially for the week-evening services, are really remarkable. The "Young Men's Endeavour" and "Young Men's Guilds are in a flourishing condition. It was reported that for all purposes the sum of £2,444 has been secured. The "Women's Own" began a year ago by Mrs. Kendall, have witnessed great success. Two new building schemes will soon be begun. On Easter Tuesday the "Women's Own" held a social ceremony at Coedely, a large mining village, which does not possess a church of any denomination, and we shall solve the problem here by aggressive evangelism. The Tonyrefail new church, which is to cost about £4,000, will also be started in the near future. The opportunities in the area covered by this mission are astounding and worthy of the support of our Church, which has always been ready to respond. In the course of the next few years huge towns will spring up, and a new town to accommodate a population of 2,000 minutes has already been inaugurated. We are being generously helped by the Missionary Committee, but events are moving so rapidly that we need far greater support. It is not a difficult matter to increase our church membership; the serious problem is how to find the all-

important cash. Our people are generous but poor. They are giving systematically, but it is the big donation that we require. Forth Chapel is being wonderfully assisted by a lady, Mrs. 19550. The circuit steward, Councillor A. Seymour, was thanked for his past services, whilst Rev. Wilfred E. Curry was warmly commended on his appointment by the General Missionary Committee as a candidate for the foreign field.

Linking Up Circuits.

A Successful Experiment.

When last Conference, acting on the recommendation of the Kent Commission, decided to form one large circuit of the Chatham, Gravesend and Sheerness stations, there were some questionings. The bigness of the experiment led many to doubt the issue. But those who were conversant with the conditions felt the unification would work out its own justification. Nine months later, when the first annual report had been tried and its worth truly proved. One can honestly say it has been a most successful experiment. The united circuit—Chatham, Gravesend and Sheerness—has witnessed a development and an increase of members.

The officials have been splendidly loyal, and the devotion of the members has realised the fervour associated with the early days of the Church. Powers have been revealed, liberated and mobilised for the good of the whole circuit. Recently a three weeks' mission was carried through with inspiring results at Woolwich, one of the hardest places to reach in the whole of Chatham, Gravesend and Sheerness areas. The interchange of local preachers has been a great help. Gravesend preachers have rendered service as distant as Sheerness, thirty miles away, and preachers from Sheerness have taken service at Chatham. The circuit has been worked on all Methodist lines, keeping as remote as possible from denominationalism, and laboured to develop a strong circuit consciousness, the needs of the weakest place becoming the interests of the whole. The result has been 65 new members having been received into fellowship.

The March Quarterly Meeting, held at Chatham, can never be forgotten. The dynamics which make a circuit great were all experienced—faith, enthusiasm and love. The following resolution was unanimously adopted:—"That we place on record our thanks to God for the special way His blessing has rested on the unification of the three circuits since July. The Quarterly Meetings have been large, having an average attendance of 1,000, and in spirit they have been wonderfully good. Great financial success has been achieved. Chatham Church, with a membership of 1,000, has been cleared off an adverse balance on the Trust accounts. Jillingham Church has also had a successful effort and balance in its favour. The help of a legacy, has cleared off a debt of 265, and Gravesend has raised £80 to begin their renovation work. The circuit is enabled to do without the grant of £20 given to help the finances of Gravesend. Through the union of the three circuits, we are enabled to commence building operations at Sheerness, and, greatest of all things, we are able to report an increase of 39 members since the last year after the roll. God has done great things for us, and we are glad."

Mr. John Dingley, of Birmingham, has been a member of the circuit for twenty-two years' unbroken association with the Sunday-school, and has held all its offices, and has a long list of 2,000 minutes, and a great old age. On the morning of this twenty-second anniversary he had the privilege of being asked to preach his first sermon in the aforementioned church. John Shakespeare is a young fine parts, and has been a member of the circuit since his first sermon in the aforementioned church. His debut was a great and pleasant surprise to his auditors.

CHURCH PICTURES.

Rev. John Holland.

By PHOTOFLEX.

The many friends of John Holland will not assent when I say I hardly know how or where to start with him. He is difficult to sketch; he won't sit still. He's an uneasy, restless, fidgety bean. To portray him one must do with the breakers on a rugged foreshore—take mental cinematographic impressions of momentary shades and formations, then recompose them into the final colour. The engine of his vital energies is always working with open throttle, except when he is asleep. But there's the interest! Death is inescapable, dreams are incoherent; subliminal consciousness is elusive: it's life that matters.

Meet John Holland once and you will remember him for the rest of the journey. He will make a definite impression on you. Not that he will consciously intrude himself, nor designedly parade himself. It is just that he cannot help it; he must either express himself or do it. When he is in the room, he is in what my boy's balloon did at Christmas when it lighted on a holy spire. But the impression will be altogether a pleasant one. You will remember his humour, his vivacity, his gesture; but chiefly you will remember his abundant, big-hearted cordialities and affection. If occasion should call upon him to write his epitaph, it would be: "He was brother to any man." I doubt if, in his heart, he ever really believed in "total depravity"; he assumes the good in everybody—excepting, perhaps, the brewer. An honest glass of beer is his best. You needn't knock them to gain admittance to his sanctum; he'll meet you on the doorstep with wide-spread hand and call in the nearest tones of warmest welcome: "Come in, my brother." I saved him for Newcastle in Revival 1919. On the opposite the Central Station I saw him alight from a tram, greet Jacob Richardson, and, slipping his arm through the arm of his friend, he walked off together—John Holland talking and gesticulating, and Richardson intermittently nodding assent as far as I could see them.

The anxiety of entertaining friends is short-lived when Mr. Holland is a guest. He is a programme in himself, and will promptly relieve the occasion by providing the fare. He is a lively storyteller, and has a genuine inexhaustible stock-in-trade. Perchance he will begin with something humorous, and you will laugh till you ask him to change the record. He will laugh, too, as heartily as anyone, even when the story is against himself. Then he will relate something authentic, and the tremolo stop which is central in his vocal organ will be full drawn out, and you will remember the single, When the anecdote turns religious, a moment or later they will, then humour, pathos and spiritual feeling will blend in fine personal effect. John Holland is a man to his boot soles. The ministry, for him, is neither a profession nor a logical imperative: it is a consuming passion; it is a very life to him. And his great emphasis is on evangelism. Some men are scholars and teachers, some are preachers, some are social workers, some are administrators: John Holland is an evangelist. When his passion and pathos and pathos begin to flow, the sinner's heart long silent chords vibrate again.

His evangelism is not, however, limited to the pulpit; it finds pastoral expression. He is a true shepherd. Personal, pastoral work is a positive delight to him. To-day a widow writes, to lend some wayward lad a helping hand, to snatch a lame dog from the jaws of death is more to him than the world's psychoanalysis or Einstein's "Relativity." His name is precious in many hearts and in many homes. He carries his religion everywhere, and his words were Sunday clothes. So he is spirited, so cheery and tactful is his religious demeanour, that without strain, he will hold heart-to-heart con-

versation with the most bigoted sectarian; he has been known to gain entrance to the inner sanctuary of a fanatic.

John Holland turns from anything crooked or camouflaged as he would from an enemy. He is not a devotee of the conventional in his never trespasses on sincerity. He risks pretence. He will challenge and ask the dearest friend for the sake of what he thinks is right, and he will fight till right prevails. He is, however, not in his true role when he is fighting. He prefers to woo. Such is his insinuating faculty for finding and stimulating the latent of Rev. T. Butler if he had left a single circuit for which he cannot return. As in Watts' picture "Love and Life," flowers spring from the rock wherever his feet have trod.

NEWS OF REVIVAL.

The Revival Spreading.

A glorious season of refreshing came to Great Thornton-street Church, Hull, on Sunday last. The young people's section had arranged a special day. There were good attendances during the day, an excellent congregation being present for the evening service. At the invitation of Rev. T. Butler if he had left a single circuit for which he cannot return. As in Watts' picture "Love and Life," flowers spring from the rock wherever his feet have trod.

Revival in Villages.

Disa Circuit is sharing in the spirit of revival—or is it a revival of the Spirit? We are not experiencing anything very sensational. Our converts are few and far between. We have been tending our services for some years and who have been obliged to yield to the persistent appeals to surrender their all to Christ. The weekly Endeavour meeting has formed our best fighting ground. These meetings practically all ceased during the war owing to the leaders being away, and it was somewhat difficult to restart them. At one place two or three were meeting week by week, and at another one or two. At one meeting could possibly survive, when one night a young man who had been through the Sunday-school dropped in and found one or two members present. They had their meeting, and that young man gave his heart to the Lord. Others have done so later on a special service was held and five young persons were publicly received into church fellowship. At another place, following an appeal for volunteers, a young woman stood up and said, "Lord, take me." Since then, in that society, several more young people have declared for Christ, and two missions have been conducted on the circuit, which have been very fruitful to many village causes in addition to those mentioned. Our latest triumph occurred last week, when a man who has been under conviction for two years at least left his seat as the missioner appealed for whole-hearted surrender to Christ and just knelt down at the front and gave himself up to the Lord. Immediately his wife sat up on her knees and thanked the Lord for answering her prayers—after six weeks. She was saved herself six weeks ago. The next night, in the same meeting, her husband and she stood together and sang, "Tis done, the great transaction's done; I am my Lord's and He is mine, etc." We believe these are only forerunners.

Rev. W. Roberts in Bedford.

The visit of Rev. W. Roberts to the Bedford Second Circuit has been one of great blessing. On arrival at Bedford, Mr. Roberts went direct to Caulwell-street Church, where a good company of friends awaited him. Sunday was a great beginning. In the evening the church was quite full. In the afternoon the appeal was to the young people, and many of them responded. In the evening a number of adults publicly confessed Christ. Night by night the streets were missioned. One night we had a remarkable experience. As we were singing along one of the streets a young married man came to the door to see what was going on. One of our workers button-holed him and invited him to the service. He hurriedly got himself ready and came along. That very night he was gloriously converted. The second Sunday was splendid in every way. Mr. Roberts' personality drew a large crowd, and his messages were full of power.

THE PRESIDENT'S VISITS.

When this Connexion year began I planned to be in my own pulpit at least one Sunday a month. It is little enough in all conscience, for I have been growing convinced that for me at least concentration is best. I have been on circuits this year where the ministers never give more than one Sunday a quarter to any place. I met an American minister in Oxford once who was on holiday, "doing" Europe for two months, and asked about his church. That is close," he said, and when I expressed my astonishment he added, "Don't you think people want to be made as preachers as you are? I could not ask any rude question about the kind of preaching from which they needed a rest, so I held my peace." I was on my own circuit enabled me among other things to preach the choir sermons for the twenty-second year. The war dropped one year out of the series. The Princes-avenue choir richly deserves all appreciation. For regularity, efficiency and self-sacrifice it ranks with the best choir of Methodism. The proceeds of its own anniversary are for the trust fund. The choir I have been known these many years has never been given a moment's anxiety to minister or officials. The late Mr. W. E. Woodhall was its devoted organist for over a quarter of a century; Mr. Frank Keating now presides at the organ with marked efficiency; Mr. E. W. Thomas, hon. secretary of the Liverpool Choral Union, is the capable and enthusiastic musical director.

During the week Liverpool got the political shock of its history. From the days of the American slave the city has been overwhelmingly Conservative. When a Liberal Government under the lead of Wilberforce and others introduced its Bill for the emancipation of the slaves Liverpool shipowners and cotton men felt that

their interests were threatened, and those who were either Liberal or Radical passed over to the Conservative party. For various reasons this decision has never been reversed. The brewing interests of the city have reinforced it. Working men's Conservative clubs have been formed. Liverpool has been a safe retreat for the predominant party. The Edge Hill district, however, has through all the nation's changing fortunes, but a change has come. Whether for the better or the worse I am neither saying nor dissuading any political party, much less necessary intolerance of other parties. The charity which differs to follow every man and woman and women of different political faiths can live together in the same church. More and more this question will be with us, and it ought to be said that loyalty to any denomination does not involve adherence to any political party, much less necessary intolerance of other parties. The charity which differs to follow every man and woman and women of different political faiths can live together in the same church. More and more this question will be with us, and it ought to be said that loyalty to any denomination does not involve adherence to any political party, much less necessary intolerance of other parties.

Incidentally this election stresses one of the problems of the Church—How men and women of different political faiths can live together in the same church. More and more this question will be with us, and it ought to be said that loyalty to any denomination does not involve adherence to any political party, much less necessary intolerance of other parties. The charity which differs to follow every man and woman and women of different political faiths can live together in the same church. More and more this question will be with us, and it ought to be said that loyalty to any denomination does not involve adherence to any political party, much less necessary intolerance of other parties. The charity which differs to follow every man and woman and women of different political faiths can live together in the same church. More and more this question will be with us, and it ought to be said that loyalty to any denomination does not involve adherence to any political party, much less necessary intolerance of other parties.

On another page will be found an announcement by Messrs. F. Bibby and Co. of Mr. McLaren's "Expositions of Holy Scripture" in thirty-three volumes, inclusive of an exhaustive index. This is an invaluable set to all engaged in Christian work. Mr. McLaren is not only a great expositor, but his writings are of the highest order. Dr. A. W. Ward, then Principal of Owens College, Victoria University, declared that he regarded Dr. McLaren as one of the chief literary influences of his age. The set can be purchased not only on cash terms, but there is also an arrangement whereby the set can be purchased by small instalments spread over a long period.

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What Our Readers Say.

The Late Sir William P. Hartley.

Sir,—I have undertaken, at the request of his family, to write the life of Sir William Hartley. It would be a help to me if any who may have letters from him, which they are willing to lend me, would kindly forward them to my use. In many instances they would, of course, not be published, but they might be of value to me in various ways, such as the fixing of dates, the reconstruction of his career, and, above all, the enrichment of my impression of his personality. Even trivial letters may supply useful links of information. I should be glad if any who entrust letters to me will enclose the name and address to which they are to be returned. I should also be glad of any reminiscences; these will be useful to me in the same way as the letters. Already two of our senior ministers have sent me unolicited and most welcome information of this kind.—Yours, etc.,

ANTHONY S. FRANK,
15, Albert-road, Whalley Range,
Manchester.

The Press & Public Opinion

Sir,—I have been greatly impressed by an address recently given by Mr. Hamilton Fyfe on "The Press and Public Opinion." The whole address should be carefully studied by Christian people, but I want to call particular attention to two sentences. (1) "We have still got the war mind. At one time our politicians were inclined to drop it, but unfortunately they were not strong-minded enough to adhere to what they thought to be right. At the close of the war, with the help of the newspapers, they kept alive the war spirit—just to win a General Election." (2) "To-day we have a disastrous state of opinion due entirely to the misleading of the public

by the manufacturers of public opinion. Now, Sir, are these statements correct? If so, then two questions arise—(1) Ought followers of the Prince of Peace to support the newspapers which so mislead the public and keep alive the war spirit? (2) Ought followers of the Prince of Peace to support the politicians (whatever they may call themselves) who misled the public and who kept alive the war spirit?—Yours, etc.,
ROCHDALE. F. W. BAXTER.

Re Education Grants to Training Colleges for Teachers.

Sir,—It is high time we were making ourselves heard in regard to administration of education grants. Many of our young people have been studying for the teaching profession for years. They now find their way blocked. The economic strait is hitting our young people hard. The doors of training colleges are being closed against them. The Government have been making capitation grants to training colleges which made it possible for our young people to enter the colleges, but a clause in the Fisher Act makes it possible for the grant to be reduced 50 per cent. To local authorities who have training colleges. Some of these training colleges had as far as 90 per cent of their students from outside their own area. The cutting down of their grant has made them increase their fees, discriminating against the students outside the areas of the local authorities. Four of the largest colleges, Leeds, Sheffield, London, and Bingley, have made their fees nearly prohibitive to students coming from working-class homes. Their fees used to be from £15 to £20 per year. They are now: Leeds, £80; Sheffield £80; London £120; Bingley £105. These allowances were made after students had decided to take their

places in these colleges. Now about 50 per cent of the students have withdrawn their names from the places. The reason is not far to seek. The ordinary working-man cannot afford such fees. It was a struggle for him before he cannot do at all now. This hits our district very severely.

But another injustice is done. The Board of Education favours denominational against publicly-controlled colleges. Denominational colleges are still receiving £25 to £76 per year grant, which is refused to municipal colleges. By this means students may be entering the denominational colleges for £25 to £30 per year. Surely national colleges should have first consideration. Instead they are penalized. Why should one female student be charged £120 per year at London County Council Residential College, another be charged £105 at Bingley, and a third only £27 at Ripon (Church) Training College? Surely we have something to say on a matter which affects our young people so much. Their life's work is being hindered. Economic poverty blocks their way to a profession which means so much to the life of the nation.—Yours, etc.,
JOHN CLENNELL.

Tow Law.

Mr. John Leah.

On Monday, March 5th, whilst attending a special temperance gathering at the Town Hall, Leeds, Mr. John Leah received his call to the HomeLand. In his passing Stockport Second Circuit has lost one of its outstanding personalities. Coming from Macclesfield, over fifty years ago, he joined our Lancashire Hill Church, and throughout the years rendered faithful and valuable service as teacher, school superintendent, class leader and tract treasurer. For sixty-two years he was true to his calling as a local preacher, and for fifteen years was circuit steward. He was laid to rest in Willow Grove Cemetery after a service at the home of his daughter. Rev. J. H. Crenney officiated.

Diamond Jubilee Celebration.

On Saturday a party was held to celebrate the nineteenth birthday of Mr. Peter Wright, of Cross Church, who has had an unbroken membership in the Wigan Circuit for about sixty years. It was while living in Roby Mill that Mr. Wright came into touch with Primitive Methodism, and for a time, before moving to Orrell, he served the Roby Mill Sunday school as superintendent. Removing from Orrell, he attached himself to Douglas Bank Church, and with Mr. James Goulding was instrumental in forming a Sunday-school there. About 100 friends from Roby Mill, Orrell and Crooke attended a well-provided tea. In the evening a concert was given by Messrs. M. Snowden, A. Gill, F. Farrimond and Miss Dorothy Snowden. Rev. M. Dain presided. Addresses were given by Messrs. T. A. Halliwell and George Ashurst. A presentation was made to Mr. Wright by Mr. M. Aspinall on behalf of his many friends. Mr. Wright, responding in characteristically brief fashion. Special services were held the following day, musical items being contributed by the married folk. The circuit minister was preacher. At the evening service, in the presence of a large congregation, a brass band to the memory of the Thomas Fairhurst was unveiled by the eldest son, Mr. John Fairhurst, who paid a very touching tribute to his father's loyalty to Crooke Church and School.

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Sir W. ROBERTSON NICOLL, LL.D.

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The Primitive Methodist Leader.

Incorporating the Primitive Methodist and the Primitive Methodist World.

Thursday, March 15, 1923.

Notes and News.

The Indecencies in the Public Press.

The moral sense of the public is being shocked and, we fear, depraved by the disgusting details which have been made public property by our newspapers, in two cases in particular, which have been before the High Courts. The nauseous facts which have been exposed in crowded courts and broadcasted with sewer-gas effects by the Press of the country almost without exception throughout the homes, shops, business houses and schools is doing deadly work in the minds of the people, and, we are afraid, particularly among young men and women. No foreign nation allows such publications to be done. In the name of our morality and common decency such publications ought to be suppressed. A deputation waited on the Lord Chancellor on Monday last week in reference to the reporting of divorce cases. He expressed his sympathy with the objects at which they aimed. In his view the best course to take was in the first place to confer with the newspaper proprietors and editors, and in the second to organise public opinion in favour of their views. He further suggested that the matter should be brought before the House of Commons. It is hoped that there is a very wide feeling on the subject in the country. A petition has already been presented containing about a quarter of a million signatures. Here is a question which should be unitedly taken up by the Churches of the country. The Royal Commission on Divorce (1912) suggested giving statutory power to judges to close the courts or to order non-publication of evidence. And yet revolting details are served up to the public, sometimes with sensational headlines, and the filth circulates throughout the community. In the name of God and of our homes we utter our protest.

The European Situation and the Way of Christ.

The World Alliance for promoting international friendship throughout the Churches promises to be most useful and powerful in the interests of world peace. It has now National Councils in twenty-six of the countries of Europe and America. It holds that "there is no standard for human life but Christ's law of righteousness and love." It also insists that "it is only by the increasing application of Christian principles to international affairs that there is any hope of fellowship and peace between nations." A quite recent issue issued a manifesto in which it says: "The conditions prevailing in Europe are the outcome of ill-will and animosity, suspicion and fear. The spirit of antagonism, which either repudiates obligations or seeks revenge, is becoming everywhere predominant. Bitterness, suffering, violence and famine are the result. Material force in its naked reality is held up as the only effective weapon for dealing with all these things, so utterly opposed to the way of Christ, cannot but fail. While the Christian Church must seek to learn from her Master and in loyalty follow him, she gains the power to quicken the conscience of the peoples, it is her high task to point out the underlying principles of a true European settlement, and to appeal to men to seek peace where alone it can be found. Not until we have brought our national policies into harmony with the purpose of God shall we know the way of peace." The expression of such principles by this Alliance of Churches, which influence not only in this country but also in America and among the nations of Europe, prove what a mighty instrument for international

peace it is. Working as leaven in the Churches and as an ally and not as a competitor with the League of Nations Union, it is the support of the moral dynamic without which the League itself will remain inert and ineffectual.

Loyal Free Churchmen.

It is a source of interest, and of satisfaction also, that the general body of Free Church Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations should take the opportunity in connection with the approaching Royal wedding to present to the King their hearty congratulations. There was a goodly array of representatives, ecclesiastical as well as lay, in the ranks of the Free Church. They were most graciously received by His Majesty and the Queen, the Duke of York and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, the bride-elect. The deputation represented three dissenting denominations, and they availed themselves of their historic right of access to the Throne. But many in our churches will raise the quite natural questions: Where were the Methodists? Are they not as entitled to the Throne as the others? To present their congratulations on this happy occasion as those of the three dissenting denominations has not the political traditions and long history as these other Churches, but she represents millions of people in this old country and in the Empire. The congratulations would have been even more complete had her representatives been included in the deputation. It would have been a question of their loyalty in question? We do not think so. Then were they not invited?

Lady Astor's Bill.

The magnificent majority by which the House of Commons passed the recently introduced Temperance Bill, intoxicating liquors being sold for consumption on the premises to young persons under 18 years of age sent a thrill of thankfulness through the best hearts and the noblest minds of the nation. Lady Astor had the great honour to be in charge of the Bill and to move its adoption. Her carefully prepared speech was listened to with absorbed attention, though not entirely free from interruptions. These the noble lady instantly and skilfully answered. She has a nimble brain and a ready tongue. "It is not my Bill," she said, "There is no compulsion in godmother, and I hope a fairy one." That admission was generous and probably wise. "There had been such a volume of support behind it as this Bill had." So said Sir John Simon when speaking in its favour. It is to the credit of the Labour Party that they unanimously supported the Bill. Mr. Asquith voted in its favour. It had the support of practically the whole of the women of the country, the United Temperance Council of the Churches, and a petition signed by 150,000 school teachers. The Home Secretary opposed the Bill, but it was eloquently supported in a well-balanced speech by the Solicitor-General. Under the Government, the Government gave no promise of facilities for its future progress, but the majority of 282, made up of the vast all sections of the House, will doubtless induce them to consider the point. The country must insist that the Bill goes through and comes into law without delay. Last week "The Times" described the Bill as a "sensible reform." It pointed out that during the "drunken years of adolescence" it is the habit of drinking, particularly in the environment of a public-house, a poisonous influence on the young of both sexes. The Bill is put forward as a

means of guarding from a great danger those who are too young to fend for themselves. For their sakes it will be warmly approved of by all who have the love of children in their hearts." The passing of this Bill in its second reading is a great triumph for Lady Astor. Her name will be inseparably

associated with it. But it is a more signal triumph for temperance and morality. For it we devoutly thank God. One of the "four points" of the temperance programme of the Churches has now, we trust, been secured to the nation. Others will follow, though more slowly.

Cheer Up, Comrades!

By Rev. W. J. WALKER.

It has been borne in upon me that a word of good cheer might be welcome in many quarters, where my brethren are tilling apparently intractable patches of soil. Their hearts are heavy; and the news of mighty showers, such as those on Tyneside, only leaves them wistfully wondering why their own piece of sky should remain so unkindly. An oppressive routine holds them in check. They miss the exhilarating joys of adventure. The sparkle has gone from their ministry. Possibly, they have begun to lose faith in themselves, and in the majesty of the power they were called to preach. God bless the men who are holding on under such conditions of repression. The time of their relief, I am fully persuaded, is close at hand.

Churches which have demanded, for example, that their minister shall spend his Saturdays in attendance upon operettas, concerts, and the like, are already beginning, here and there, to be ashamed of themselves and this is a notable sign of grace. For a minister's proper place on a Saturday night is in the Holy of Holies at home, gathering inspiration for the great day of worship. Let the Churches concede this elementary provision; let them go a step further, and prepare themselves for a glorious Sunday morning's service, instead of presenting the minister with the few jaded survivors of last night's concert party, and what mighty days we shall see. With what freshness and power the glad news will then ring out! The very thought of such solemn, soul- uplifting possibilities is sufficient to bring into stark relief the present tragedy of many a manse and many a church. It is suicidal. It is so utterly impossible that, in the very nature of things, it cannot last. Ministers were never made to be business managers, much less entertainment promoters; were Churches ever intended to be the scene of endless "efforts." And, happily, as we have said, relief is already on the march.

Tyneside is a portent of much that will shortly happen. The Spirit of God is moving, and mightily moving. That is a glad conviction we missionaries have carried home with us. We claim no magical gifts: our personalities have counted but little in the grand adventure. Any one of our brethren could have witnessed the same wonderful results. It was by no means a mission of magnetic personalities. Many of us are faced by stiff problems in our home circuits. It was the message that mattered, and the fact that the Holy Spirit was at work. And there are similar stirrings everywhere throughout the land. A new revival is coming—a national revival, in which all the brethren will have their share of responsibility and glorious adventure. Very humbly, therefore, would I say to all my comrades, "Be of good cheer!"

Perhaps I may be granted the privilege of adding to this greeting a few words of brotherly counsel, born of experience. Those of us who were called to serve on Tyneside can never be sufficiently grateful for the power which came to us through the fellowship of kindred souls. Those morning meetings, when missionaries and ministers, along with other earnest workers, met together to pool their experiences, will live in my memory to the end. They were positively irresistible. It is impossible to convey in cold print the mighty impact of the gatherings. We lost ourselves, only to find ourselves again reborn, our ministries gloriously enriched. I would earnestly suggest, therefore, to my brethren this way of fellowship. It will bring release; it

will infallibly lead to a new sense of power. Even at the cost of breaking through some of the routine, find time to adventure the highways of grace in company with like-minded men. There are amazing sources of refreshment to be tapped by this method. For those who can afford to set apart the first week in July I would urgently second my friend Rev. F. W. Beal's invitation to join the Fellowship of the Kingdom at Swanwick. He will be only too happy to furnish all necessary information. The expenses are almost negligible, and certainly out of all proportion to the inspiration that will be won.

Finally, may I pass on to any downhearted brother the glowing conviction that in the Gospel we do verily possess a mighty dynamic for our time. The message we deliver is the biggest thing in the world. And the people are beginning to realise it. Disillusioned at every point, overwhelmed by the seeming peripeties of our post-war situation, they are longing for just such a way of deliverance as we can offer. Deep down there has always been a reverence for the Man of Nazareth, but now that instinctive trust is turning into a positive hunger to know what He has to say concerning the big themes of life and conduct. They want no sugary sentiment, no "dim religious light," but a clear call to the wistful yearning of their souls. Great numbers of our intelligent young people are at this very moment getting ready, all unconsciously, to answer the heroic challenge of the Master, with a steady "Here am I." We have seen the response on Tyneside and in other places. And not only the response, but the power, too. Some of the miracles recently witnessed bring back to mind the wonderful things achieved in the mightiest days of the Church's history. It is not shorthanded that He cannot save.

Gladly, therefore, will I say: "Cheer up, comrades!" The long drought is passing. The materialism and the hard, dry intellectualism of the past few decades have worked their own defeat. A new age of the Spirit is advancing to our help. Let us stand ready and eager, and we shall have our reward.

Old Testament Studies.

Ancient Hebrew Stories and their Modern Interpretation. By W. G. Jordan, B.A., D.D. (Hodder and Stoughton, 7s. 6d. net).

The range of these stories is from the Creation to Esther. Their appearance in this form affords evidence of the revived interest in the Old Testament. The manner of their treatment tends sometimes towards critical exegesis and is sometimes towards sermonic style. The many references to commentaries that are not named are calculated to irritate the ordinary reader. Yet, on the whole, this is a useful contribution to Old Testament study in the light of modern scholarship. In an introduction covering sixty pages, which reveals the influence of Sir J. E. Frazier's great work, "The Folklore of the Old Testament," the Hebrew records are considered in their bearing on world-history, a subject that compels attention to-day. Religion was not the monopoly of the Hebrews, although they were in a peculiar sense leaders in religion. Their records are not an exclusive and sacrosanct declaration of the purpose of God; these must be read in the light of the long immemorial search after goodness and God that was taking place constantly, going back further than the Hebrew records in Egypt and Babylon. It is the light that the Hebrew records throw upon this world-movement that matters to-day, and this book shows that the Old Testament, interpreted by the aid of modern scholarship, has a great contribution to make for progress.



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Churches and People.

"Joyful Songs," the new hymnbook specially prepared for Evangelistic missions and religious services generally, has just been issued. As soon as the book becomes known there will be a great demand for it. Rev. W. R. Wilkinson and the manager, Mr. A. E. Spratt, are to be congratulated upon its production. The extended notice of "Joyful Songs" will appear in our next issue.

Rev. J. T. Taylor, of Pontefract, has to be added to the list of authors. His recently published book, "The Day We Said On," has been issued almost noiselessly, but where it has been recognised there has been only one opinion as to its value. It says much for the merit of the author that the Religious Tract Society should present it to the public. It starts its career, therefore, with a publishing house of great reputation at the back of it. The production of "The Day We Said On" is very attractive, the pictures that illuminate the stories are full of suggestion, and will certainly attract the attention of all readers. The stories are told to children in the form of addresses, and are so well suited to the age of the child. Young people will readily devour these human tales. The author is to be highly commended for the soundness of his venture. (R.T.S. 3s. 6d. net.)

Rev. H. Taylor, of Sheffield, who has been lying dangerously ill at Buxton for about three months, is now showing some signs of steady improvement. Mr. Taylor is at Dalnott House, where he is receiving every attention through the courtesy of Mrs. Taylor and the great staff. It is hoped that he may shortly be able to be removed to his Sheffield home.

Rev. George Shapcott is continually witnessing developments at Wembley, and throughout the period of his superannuation he has been diligently at work. The prospect of an excellent life is all the time before him. This coming week-end the church anniversary will be held, the sermons on Sunday being preached by Rev. G. Bennett, of the aced music and song being held in the afternoon. On Monday there will be a special meeting, when J. W. Bennett, Esq., a generous friend of the church, will preside, and addresses will be given by Revs. E. F. Pigott and G. Bennett.

Twenty-one years ago last Saturday a large hall was opened at Eynsford, Fendition, in Manchester Tenth Circuit. The building is used as a Sunday school and as a place of worship. Since its erection over 400 scholars have been received into the school, and there are now 779 scholars with fifty-four teachers. During the last twelve years a card of greeting has been annually presented to each teacher and scholar on the occasion of their birthday, and during that period the weekly gifts of the scholars for the Sunday-school fund have amounted to £300. Alderman Hughes, J.P., an excellent friend of the church, has been superintendent for forty-one years, and still continues in that office by the unanimous wish of teachers and scholars.

The many friends of Miss Kenyon, widow of the late Rev. Charles Kenyon, will be pleased to hear that she has recently been appointed as probationer and missionary to the Leicester City Circuit. Under the auspices of the magistrates and the B.W.T. Miss Kenyon has been doing noble work for some years amongst women and girls, and has become well known and highly respected in the city. Mrs. Kenyon has long been associated with Leicester First Circuit, and has rendered good service as a local preacher and as a Sunday-school worker in Belgrave Gate Church.

The numerous friends of Miss Beatrice A. Byre will be glad to learn that her recently published volume of poems has been issued as a distinct and separate edition being sold out. The volume has found its way into quite a number of counties.

Councillor A. A. Hancock, a local preacher on Rhymney Valley Circuit, has returned for the second year as a Labour member (unopposed) upon the Galloway Urban Council. He has also been chosen as a governor of Bargoed School.

A sad accident occurred in the Frame Shop of the Wagon Department in the Shipyard (G.W.R.) works on Tuesday, as a result of which Mr. Robinson, a member of our district, was scalded and killed. Mr. Robinson has been an active member of the choir and a Sunday-school teacher; he was deeply respected. Rev. J. J. Bennett officiated at the funeral, assisted by Rev. E. H. Jones and Alderman H. Martin.

The Abertillery Station having decided to seek relief from a second married member, Rev. Frank Wood (first-year approved lay) is open to receive an invitation for 1923-24.

Mr. Robert Taylor, of New-road Church, Kennington and Battersea Circuit, one of our best known laymen in South London, has completed fifty years as a local preacher. A native of Pilsworth Station, he commenced to preach towards the end of 1872. For many years now he has been associated with New-road Church, and has rendered yeoman service to our cause there. The circuit Quarterly Meeting heartily congratulated him on attaining this jubilee, and prayed for him many more years of fruitful service. Two of Mr. Taylor's sons are local preachers in the same church, while another is chorister at New-road.

The Vision.

I beat my pinions 'gainst their prison bars
And craved for something wider than
had been;
My longing eyes turned to the far-off
And groped in blindness for the things
unknown.

I chafed against the weakness of my
frame
And sighed for strength of superhuman
power,
When to my soul a radiant Vision came
And brought its cleansing and its
strengthning down.

I saw a mighty Hand stretched to my aid
And felt the grasp of Him Who is my
strength;
I heard a Voice that bade me unafraid
Pursue my task till He should come at last;
Conscious no longer of my prison bars,
I turned, and lo! life's path lay
laid out with stars.

By J. W. LLOYD PAGE.

Gouthampton.

Mr. Harold Pickering, M.Inst.M. and C.E., A.R.S.I., circuit steward of the Dunstable Circuit, has been elected to the office of Honorary Secretary of Municipal and County Engineers. The Institution has a membership of 2,500, and nominations were sent from all parts of the United Kingdom.

We regret to report the passing on Thursday last of Alderman James Barr, of Leominster, who, although a sufferer from a long illness, continued loyal to his civic and church duties until a few days since. He was one of Mr. G. E. Noble's men, and was held in great esteem by a large circle of friends.

The Rochdale "Observer" and the Rochdale "Times" have commenced a series of weekly articles on religious and social subjects, contributed by representative ministers of both the Anglican and the Free Churches, and the intention is that they shall discuss matters of interest to the man in the street as well as to the church worshipper.

Mrs. Elizabeth Pigott, wife of the late Rev. Mr. Pigott, D.D., passed peacefully to her rest on March 7th, in her seventieth year.

Miss M. J. Stephens, Radcliffe-street Church, Nottingham, has been unanimously elected president of the Nottingham C.E. Union for the ensuing year. Miss Stephens is an earnest and devoted worker both in her own church and also for the C.E. Union.

We are very sorry to record that Mr. Morris Jones, late of Liverpool, died on Tuesday morning at Whitechapel, Salsop. He was seventy-six years of age, and his many readers will remember valuable service in the Council of the Liverpool circuit and to the missionaries when they were departing for Africa.

The Blackpool Quarterly Meeting, at which forty-four members were present, unanimously invited Rev. David Oakley to remain as superintendent until 1931. A new edifice is to be built at Chapel-street at a probable cost of £16,000 to £18,000, and Mr. Oakley declined to pledge himself to remain till 1930, or longer if it be necessary, to see the project completed. He is exercising a wonderful ministry in Blackpool, and a promise to remain has given widespread satisfaction.

Mr. Percy Anderson, of Hartley Colne, writes: "The Harlequin Benion who he had seen at the Crystal Palace, invited to join this gathering are the men of 1914 who returned to college in 1919, the men of 1915, 1916, 1919 and 1920. Dinner will be served at 7 o'clock. If anyone belonging to the above-indicated years has received no invitation, will they communicate with me before March 20th? The committee is most anxious that no man should be overlooked or forgotten."

The new address of Rev. J. H. Johnson is 11, Cedar-road, Aintree, Liverpool.

Mr. T. J. Peacock, Prince's-avenue, Huddersfield, writes: "I was very sorry to see in the Leader, in the 22nd, an advertisement asking our people to purchase of me, £6. To me it was a matter of regret, as I had tried to induce our young folk to refrain from smoking, either cigarettes or tobacco, as being injurious to their physical and financial interests. We encourage them to read the Leader, because of its high tone, and so naturally regret to see such advertisements in its pages. This is shared by all our readers, and are constant readers. Will you please consider this before allowing any more of this kind of advertisement to appear?"

Mr. E. Chester, of Harborne, Birmingham, writes: "Your notice in the Leader of the passing of Rev. John G. Williams, of Shrewsbury, carries my memory back more than fifty years. Rev. Joseph Ferguson, of Bromley, who was then superintendent of the Shrewsbury Circuit, with a second minister in 1897-78, instituted an improvement class, in which Mr. G. Williams and I, with Revs. W. M. Phillips and Thomas Davies, who went to Australia, and others were members, and became known as 'Joe Ferguson's improvement class.' G. Williams, with a delightful imagination, and by perseverance under long hours of study, was one of those that eventuated in him becoming a very popular preacher. Through in great demand by the congregation, he was absolutely loyal to our Church. It is also interesting to note that Rev. W. Perry, who assisted the general, was on probation in the Oswestry Circuit about 1871, to which circuit I removed shortly after being on full call at Shrewsbury. Mr. G. Williams will be greatly missed."

Mr. and Mrs. Hanson, of Prince's-avenue, Church and Liverpool, were married, and celebrated their golden wedding. The happy event was made the occasion of hearty congratulations from all parts of the Church and the firm with which Mr. Hanson has been so long and honourably connected. Mr. Hanson has appeared in the Liverpool Evening News.

To clear off the last financial liability at the end of the present year, the centenary Jubilee Church held a bazaar on March 6th and 7th. Lady Cook, wife of the late Mr. Cook, was the patroness of the Antislavery, opened on the first day, and was accorded an official welcome by the Mayor of Church and Liverpool, who presented her with a cheque. The bazaar was attended in a special way, accompanied by the Mayors, the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor's Council, and the Mayor of Newcastle. Mr. Edward Hollishead represented a very distinguished and representative group of visitors. The visitors were introduced by Rev. A. Wilkes. A delicious address Lady Cook expressed the pleasure it gave her to revisit those old friends, and to see the great work done by the Church. On the second day the speaker was Mr. Wm. Rhodes. Both belong to honored families at Treharne, the vicar of the church.

Devotion to the Church of their lifelong love. The workers have been most devoted and untiring, and with great success. Friends paid the whole of the expenses of the bazaar, so the gross amount raised—£658—will go to the funds.

GENERAL COMMITTEE NOTES.

Rev. W. Masson Kelly presided last Friday evening. Mr. J. H. Jones, of Bristol, Bramall, Deed Pool member, was reported. The tragic circumstances of the death of Mrs. Jones, of Farnham, sympathetically noted, and tributes to his long and faithful ministry were borne by the secretary and Revs. John Holland, Joseph E. Gilbert and Joseph Johnson. Sympathy was expressed with Revs. John Bradbury, F. A. Young and Thomas Harrison, who had received a telegram of good wishes to Lady Astor in the introduction of her Bill in Parliament that day was sent, and special prayer was offered for her behalf that God would give her success in her courageous effort. Sanction was given to Loughborough Circuit to employ Mr. J. Wood Page as hired local preacher from April next.

Approval was given by Rev. Charles Higgins to give oversight to Sheffield Hoyle-street Circuit until Conference, in the hope that Rev. Henry Taylor would be able to resume the superintendency of the circuit. An application for Rev. F. A. Young, of Gooles, to have oversight of the circuit, and to do work for three months was approved, the second minister, Rev. H. Percival Taylor, was offered, and a salary of £100 for a supplementary supply being left with the secretary. The pledges of two probationers were received and approved, and Revs. J. H. Jones, of Loughborough and Battersea Circuit, and Joseph Bellis, of Hamilton.

Mr. J. H. Jones, of Loughborough, received from the President of the General Conference of the United States Primitive Methodist Church (Rev. G. J. Jeffries, Bangor, Penna., U.S.A.) an application to give official recognition to a B.D. degree conferred on Rev. J. M. Higgins, of Loughborough, U.S.A., by the U.S.A. was deferred for further enquiry. The Seminary is reported to be an Accredited Higher Institution, associated with and recognized by Washington University, St. Louis.

A Veteran Honoured.

Among all friends of the Manchester Eighth Circuit (Swinton and Pendlebury) the name of Healey is held in highest esteem. On Monday, March 10th, in the Chorley-road Church, a grand reunion was held, the central feature of which was the presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Healey of a handsome grandfather clock and a silver tea service. Rev. H. G. Meehan, M.A., D.D., presided over a large and enthusiastic gathering of past and present members. An orchestra and a band of talented artists, under the leadership of Mr. H. Barnes, provided delightful music.

"The presentations were made by Mr. and Mrs. Healey, and Miss Helen. Most cordial speeches were given by Messrs. T. Wolstenholme, E. Garner, T. L. Gerrard (Vice-President of Conference), W. T. Poulton (President of L.L.B.), the latter paying high tribute to the public service of Mr. Healey as a member of the Wesleyan U.D.O. Mr. Healey has held a position of honor for twenty-five years' membership, during which he has held the office of superintendent, and has been a local preacher and Quarterly Meeting secretary. A pleasing feature was the presentation by Miss Edna Wolstenholme, of a large and beautiful floral bouquet to Mrs. Healey. The whole circuit united in the hope that Mr. and Mrs. Healey will continue to be able to serve to continue their faithful service.

A successful sale of work has been held at a brickkiln, Kendal. Mr. R. W. Thomas, J. Hopkins and others. The opening ceremony was performed by Mrs. B. W. Thomas. The proceeds of the sale were £100. Rev. J. W. Thomas announced that the proceeds had realised the handsome sum of £100, and a substantial receipt from Mr. L. Quiggin a cheque for £10.

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